

The Classical Bulletin

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Vol. VI

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No. 7

The Minoan Wonderland

(Continued from the March number)

In my previous paper I described the marvelous Minoan Palace at Knossos, on the Island of Crete. It was there that the Bronze Age culture of Europe reached its highest point. Thence, too, the material civilization of the Western world may be said to have drawn its origin through Greece and Rome. We are therefore peculiarly interested in every detail of the subject.

The beginning of Minoan culture is dated as contemporaneous with that of Egypt. Thus the blackish clay pottery, with incised designs, found in the earliest Minoan stratum is equally discovered in the Egyptian tombs of the First Dynasty.

The date assigned to the latter by Petrie is 5510 B. C., by Lepsius 3892, and by Meyer 3315 B. C. In the face of this wide divergence of views we shall conform best with the general opinion of historic authorities by accepting the last of these dates as the most correct. Let us say that about the year 3300 before the Christian era Minoan culture began. But on the very site of the great Palace at Knossos, where it was to reach its zenith about a millennium and a half later, lay buried even then the strata of still earlier human settlements, belonging to the Neolithic Age, and reaching down as deep as twenty-five feet beneath the earliest Minoan.

It was apparently this first population which, at some distant prehistoric date, had crossed the Mediterranean from the African shore. At the period to which we now refer began that higher material development to which the name "Minoan" has been given. Egyptian influences doubtless were strongly felt by it throughout its progress. Points of contact were later also made with Assyria and Babylonia, as we can judge from the use of clay tablets in the official Minoan records, and of Babylonian cylinders that go back to about the year 2000 B. C.

Yet none of these influences were such as to interfere with the characteristic and unique development of Minoan art and civilization, which is not simply dependent on that of Egypt, but parallel with it.

Sir Arthur Evans, who may deservedly speak with authority on the subject of Minoan culture, divides it into three groups: Early, Middle, and Late Minoan, to each of which he assigns three periods, making nine in all. The arrival of bronze in the Eastern Mediterranean regions and the building of the great palaces at Knos-

sos and Phaestos belong to the Middle Minoan. The second period of this can be sufficiently well dated by the seals of two Egyptian Kings, Senusert II and Amenemhat III, found upon vases in Minoan tombs. Both these Pharaohs belonged to the Twelfth Dynasty, whose entire sway, according to Meyer, extended from 2000 to 1800 B. C.

After that period, then, begins the Minoan golden age, with a wide diffusion of wealth, marvelous architectural sumptuousness, and high artistic development, but possibly also with wider imperialistic ambitions. In the ranks of Minoan and Negro soldiers in Minoan garb, led at double-quick by a Minoan captain. Not improbably they may represent mercenary or colonial troops. Their dark bodies contrast strongly with the reddish skin of their leader. At all events, Minoan merchant ships commanded the Mediterranean and Aegean, while Minoan Crete became the Britannia of its day. Minoan colonies were growing up and transplanted the traditions of this gifted and energetic race to Mainland Greece and elsewhere.

We are here dealing, be it understood, with a cultured people who possessed a complete system of writing, traceable by us through all its successive stages: pictographic, hieroglyphic, and linear, as well as an ordinary cursive script. But save for the picture writings little can as yet be deciphered by modern savants.

Documents pertaining to government matters have been preserved because recorded on clay tablets after the Babylonian fashion. We here behold in practice all the formalism of present-day government methods in the signing, counterchecking, and ultimate countersigning of official documents. But the ordinary Minoan literature, probably written upon more perishable materials, such as the Egyptian papyrus, could rarely have survived. Yet Homeric scholars in particular will be profoundly interested in such fragments as may yet yield up their secrets in the course of time.

Social conventionalities, too, were strictly observed, as we can note them on the pictured fragments of stucco unearthed among the debris of palace or mansion, where all the pride and glory of Minoan society lay buried in the dust, forgotten and unknown, during the past millenniums.

In their costumes we find the long dresses of the ladies, as seen in the Palace frescoes, contrasting quite strangely with the sparse, though equally richly col-

ored and patterned clothing of the men. The latter had slightly evolved the customary Egyptian loin cloth into a kilt, worn under a uniquely rounded metal belt, which tightly contracted the waist. In the fresco of the so-called Cup-Bearer we behold a refined Minoan type of youth, figuring in a religious procession. His tunic tapers sidewise towards the knees and ends below them in a net-work of lozenge-shaped meshes, with beads at their intersection, and artistic pendants. Silver collars appear to have been commonly worn by these men, as well as gold or silver armlets, bracelets and anklets.

The women, as seen in this same court society, dressed in rich bodices and long robes reaching to their feet and invariably flounced. More short-skirted dresses belonged to an earlier age. Homer's "long-robed Thetis" accurately answers the description of these court ladies. Their entire costume expressed not mere elegance, but luxury. The same unique metal belt was worn by them as by the men.

On the fragments of colored fresco which have dropped from the walls, there remain, for instance, just the details of a woman's coiffure, with festoons of beads or pearls, and strings of conventionalized silver crocus flowers intertwining with the heavy coils of her hair. Again we find a bit of stucco showing a man's finger in relief as he is placing a jewel around a lady's neck. Or suddenly the eye is caught by a bright combination of colors, displaying on a painted fragment the precious embroideries of a woman's sleeve. But large and more complete frescoes, too, have been preserved, showing us seated ladies dividing their attention, as has been observed, between their toilet and their conversation.

Such were the people who at the height of their material development, perhaps becoming effeminate through luxury, were approaching the decline of their civilization,—a decline which had similarly overtaken other empires before their own, and would befall in turn the great monarchies that then ruled the world.

There is a Royal Road, leading to the great Minoan Palace, and scientifically constructed with layers of rock and concrete. On its surface the stone-slabs are peculiarly placed in the center, with the concrete to both sides. Along that road no royal chariots or horses were intended to pass, such as we hear of in the later Minoan age, but over it were carried doubtless those palanquins which we behold in fresco or bronze, and in which were carried princes and queens, foreign ambassadors, native dignitaries, ladies of the court, or wives of the rich merchants whose fortune was on the seas.

Homer, again, had gauged this civilization well when in his special allusion to Minoan society at Knossos he chose to describe a dancing-floor, which the god Hephaestus is represented as designing for the shield of Achilles:

"Therein furthermore the famed god of the two strong arms cunningly wrought a dancing floor, like unto that which in wide Knossos Daedalus fashioned of old for fair-tressed Ariadne. There were youths dancing and maidens of the price of many cattle. . . . Now they would run round with cunning feet exceed-

ingly lightly, and now again would they run in rows towards each other. And a great company stood around the lovely dance" (Il. XVIII, 590-604).

That very dancing-floor wrought by Daedalus for Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, may be the Theatral Area annexed to the Palace. From the floor of this area wide steps arise to two sides where a "great company," exactly such as Homer describes, could "stand around" watching a dance like that pictured on the shield of Achilles. But with still further accuracy Homer adds a final detail: "two tumblers," he says, "whirled up and down through the midst of them as leaders in the dance" (Ib. 604-605).

Now the Minoans, as their frescoes make plain, were skilled in precisely such turns. They were a people delighting in acrobatic feats. This we find amply illustrated in their bull-grappling scenes. The slim Minoan acrobat, as we may judge from popular fresco and statuette, tensely awaited the charging beast and caught it by its horns. Then, as in full course the animal fiercely reared its head, he flung himself into the air and performed a somersault, landing safely with his feet on its broad back. Not only do we possess the representations of this sport, but the fresco also of a packed grandstand.

One of the most remarkable pieces of Minoan bronze casting is in fact the figurine of a bull-vaulting scene. With vivid realism the artist has chosen the moment after the Minoan youth had flung himself over the head of the charging animal and completed his turn, while holding on to the horns. He has now let go that hold and is facing rearward. His feet are planted lightly on the back of the enormous bull, while his upper body is still arched over the neck of the galloping animal, and his long tresses hang gracefully downward, making another point of contact for his figure with the Minoan king of beasts. The heavy neck and mighty proportions of the fierce animal contrast strikingly with the light, slender, and sinewy frame of the youth. Greek art has here been born. Modern realism and impressionism have been anticipated. Technically considered it is a triumph of the metal worker's art.

It is a pity we can not know more of the skilled craftsmen engaged in those Minoan ateliers, whose work was prized in many lands. At a later period, in the time of the Egyptian Pharaoh Thothmes III, we find Minoan gift-bringers depicted in the tombs of his Vizier and other principal officers. The tributes they are conspicuously carrying in their hands are mainly vases and works of art produced by their craftsmen. We see a royal officer carefully making record of each gift. A heap of distinctive Minoan articles of artistic workmanship is in great part the treasure represented as already brought by them.

The name given by the Egyptians to these sea merchants was *Keftiu*. They are unmistakeable on the Egyptian monuments, with their long black hair, dark, reddish bodies, and peculiar ornamental kilts. But other

evidence is not wanting. "The princes of Keftiu of the Islands of the Sea," reads an inscription under such a scene in the beautiful Egyptian Rekhmara tomb. Some of the gifts the Egyptian artists faithfully depict are almost veritable duplicates of the gracefully fashioned and ornamented vases or statuettes which modern excavations have recovered from the long-buried Minoan tombs or cities.

The glorious shield of Achilles, with its successive layers of metal, its wonderful bronze-cast scenes and inlay work of precious metals, no less than the hero's shining armor made by the crook-foot god, is recognized to be a characteristic Minoan product, glorified by the poet's imagination. The same holds true of Herakles's shield of Heracles.

Homeric details, in fact, can often be minutely verified, as when at Tiryns was found the veritable "cornice of *cyanus*" or blue glass enamel (*Od.* vii, 87) which had mystified the commentators; or when at Mycenae was dug up an almost perfect duplicate of the elaborate cup of Nestor described in the *Iliad*. "A beauteous cup," Homer says, dwelling lovingly upon every particular of its workmanship, "that the old man had brought from home, studded with bosses of gold. Four were the handles thereof, and about each twain doves were feeding, while below were two supports" (*Il.* xi, 631-5). A gold cup found, badly crushed, in a Mycenaean shaft grave, by Schliemann has four handles like Nestor's, on each of which, close to the brim, is a dove with outspread wings, as if prepared to drink, while the Homeric "supports" consist in strips of gold extending from the lower parts of the handles. Even the four bronze bosses or rivets of gold, mentioned by Homer, are actually found upon it.

Plants, flowers and animals of every kind are wrought into most original and artistic decorative designs, and we realize what true children of the sea these Minoans were by the most marvelous ornamental use made of sea growths and sea creatures. Thus on a steatite libation vessel, is an octopus, his tentacles coiling about the pictured rocks and corallines, while he himself is in hiding, with just one round large eye seen watching cautiously. On another vessel is a dolphin, swimming above the rocks, while below is the multifarious life of the sea, crabs, and barnacles, and whatever else the artist's imagination recalled for his sea motif.

The religion of these people, which naturally interests us most, is ubiquitously brought to our notice in the Minoan Palace at Knossos. We recognize it in the libation vessels of every kind, in the sacred horns beheld on all sides, in the mysterious double-axe symbol, in the sacred pillars with their seeming religious connotations, in the bull symbolism, in the statuettes unfortunately suggestive perhaps of something of that worship which led to the impure cults of Babylon, Greece and Rome, in the snake goddess and dove goddess, and finally in the sanctuaries of the Minoan Priest-King, and in the magnificent religious procession fresco of the Palace corridor.

Paramount, however, was the cult of a mother-goddess, common to all the old Oriental religions. With her a son was generally associated, as a child or as a young man. In the latter instance we have apparently a clear reminder of the Babylonian Ishtar and Tammuz cult, which in Greece became the Aphrodite and Adonis cult. Ishtar, or Astarte, as she is often called, had conspicuous centers of worship at Byblos on the Syrian Coast and at Paphos in Cyprus. At both of these sites the Minoan merchants were wont to carry on trade. The island of Crete may thus have become the stepping-stone from which this fertility cult, productive of so much impurity in the ancient world, may have found its way to Greece.

One thing is certain, that in all places and at all times humanity has felt the supreme need of worship. The hearts of men are made for God and they can find no rest, as St. Augustine has so truly said, until they rest in Him.

The great decline set in with possibly a seismic catastrophe before the year 1550. We are now in the late Minoan period when apparently Crete became tributary to Egypt. "I have come," an Egyptian Pharaoh of this time sings in a hymn of victory to his god, "causing thee to smite those who are in the isles: those who are in the midst of the Great Green (Sea) hear thy roarings."

But there were other roarings than those of the Egyptian god whom the Pharaoh extols, for from the north came the forerunners of what now threatened to be a great invasion. The Egyptian records show decided uneasiness about the disturbances which they cannot understand, for at last, about the year 1200, the Dorian forces sweep irresistibly over Mainland Greece. Knossos, too, falls beneath the onset of hostile armies. The city is sacked; all Crete is shaken. Then a long age of darkness, lasting for centuries, broken only by glints of light, as I may say, until about the year 700, when Greek sculpture emerges, and finally classic Greek art begins—or shall we call it the Minoan Renaissance?

St. Louis, Mo.

JOSEPH HUSSLEIN, S. J.

In point of language, Livy, together with Sallust and Nepos, is the connecting link between the golden and silver ages of Latinity; he possesses the qualities of the latter in such degree only as to enhance the beauties of the former.—*Westcott*.

To Arnold, the Bible, Shakespeare, Greek Art, are the three great and eternal classics, which for all time must be the stimulus and the models for the greatest of human achievements.—*Percy Gardner*.

Virgil, the greatest of the Latin poets, was a native of Mantua; his rival, Horace, was born at Venusia in South Italy. Latinized herself, Italy began to diffuse the same influence among the Western provinces.—*Rostovtzeff*.

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April, 1930

No. 7

Editorial

In the March number of the *Classical Journal* (Vol. XXV, No. 6, pp. 422 ff.), Mr. Robert Virgil Fletcher makes an eloquent plea for the study of Greek as an antidote to the gross materialism and sickly sentimentalism which are making such inroads on modern American life. It is, of course, the study of Greek literature and philosophy that Mr. Fletcher has principally in mind. Yet, while he admits that many excellent translations of the Greek classics are now available, as well as many treatises on the value and content of Greek thinking—an acquaintance with which is better than to know nothing of Greece at all,—still he also rightly insists that “if we are to catch the true spirit of Greece, if we are to learn the lessons which that noble language teaches, if we are really to walk in the very porches of the Academy, we must take the words as they fell from the eloquent lips of her poets, sages, and philosophers.” We may add that perhaps the Greek language itself is the most perfect embodiment of the Greek genius, that genius for simplicity, clearness, directness, fidelity to truth and logic, joined to the inimitable charm and dignity of an all-pervading sense of beauty. Something of this genius can be caught even by the high-school Greek student, despite his very limited contact with the tongue of Hellas; and there are few influences, if we except revealed religion, that would be more wholesome and more valuable to the adolescent American of to-day than this contact. It would surely be a mistake for classical teachers to become penny-wise by descending to utilitarian arguments for the study of Greek. If this study

has supplied a fundamental human need in the past, that fundamental human need clamors all the more for satisfaction at present, by reason of the complexity of our civilization and its well-known tendencies to materialism and sentimentalism.

We would call attention to an interesting appreciation of “The Millbrook (N. Y.) Greek Play and Its Choral Dances” by Fr. Francis P. Donnelly, S. J., which appeared in the February number of *Art and Archaeology* (Vol. XXIX, No. 2, pp. 57 ff.). The nine beautiful double-tone illustrations accompanying the article are genuine works of art and will be found most instructive by teachers of Greek tragedy. They represent individual characters and chorus scenes from the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and the *Medea* and *Trojan Women* of Euripides.

It is difficult to read much at a time of either Virgil or Milton, if we would read them aright. There is something in almost every line that claims our attention; something that gives evidence of a mind, a study, a sense of beauty different in kind from most poets.—*Nettlehip*.

To the Greeks life was a beautiful thing, a rich experience not unmixed with tragedy but reflecting at all times a certain charming grace and dignity. This innate dignity was best expressed in simplicity of line, clearness of statement, directness of speech, fidelity to truth, and absolute regard for the processes of logic.—*Robert Virgil Fletcher*.

Debating as an Aid to Interest in Latin

A lively interest in what is going on in the world generally, and especially in our own locality, will often provide the teacher with a means of bringing his subject home to his class. A year ago our newly-elected district attorney began a vigorous prosecution of the corruption prevalent among officials of the municipal government. His name and picture received front-page notice almost daily over the period of a month. His activity put the legal profession before the students in a rather heroic light and gave me something with which to arouse in them a deeper interest in Latin.

We were, at the time, just finishing our second reading of Cicero's “Defence of Archias.” Here was a case, a question of civil rights, a cock-sure lawyer presenting incontrovertible evidence, a fine challenge to a bold spirit ready to tackle a difficult problem. Would a student, with the limited evidence at hand, attempt the prosecution of Archias? The response of candidates ready to take the assignment gave me no easy task of selection. But it was a happy situation and there was interest enough in the class to suggest the possibility of a formal court-room trial. A running report of what

the students did may prove encouraging towards further experiments along the same lines.

With preliminary interest aroused, it seemed expedient to admit as many participants as possible, and thus sustain a solid class-interest in the matter. First we had to appoint the real principals in the debate, and then, in order to carry out the court idea as thoroughly as we could, we had all the evidence for discussion presented by witnesses. The decision was placed in the hands of a jury formally selected by the attorneys, while the teacher acted as presiding judge. Material for argument was limited to Cicero's speech of defence and whatever other historical evidence either side could gather. The principals and the witnesses had to master their parts completely and be fully acquainted with the case. With these arrangements attended to, the trial began.

The defendant, Archias, stood accused of being a "false pretender" to the right of Roman citizenship, since he did not possess the qualifications required by the *Lex Papiria*. This law extended the privilege of Roman citizenship to all registered citizens of any confederate city, provided that they were residing in Italy at the time the law was passed, and that they reported to the praetor within sixty days.

The prosecution opened the proceedings with an outline of the arguments to be used in sustaining the charge. The task, owing to the sources of the argument, was not an easy one, but the two prosecutors furnished enough difficulties to insure a debate. It may be of interest to recount their line of attack.

In the first place, they proved that Archias's name never appeared in the census of those who claimed citizenship. Then, in their cross-examination, they showed that each of the defence's witnesses, that is, Lucullus for Archias's enrollment as a citizen of Heraclea, and Quintus Metellus, the praetor, to whom Archias was supposed to have reported as a citizen, were intimate friends of the accused and, therefore, apt to be prejudiced in his favor. The prosecutors wrung the confession from Metellus that he himself had been expelled from the senate and banished from the country—a great stroke on their part to offset the defence's declaration of the witness's high moral character. Further questioning elicited evidence of the fact that Pius, the son of Quintus Metellus, was most anxious to have his deeds celebrated in verse by Archias, the inference being that the son's desire might have influenced the father's testimony. The Heracleian deputies were forced to admit that their records had perished in a fire and that they themselves were of the same nationality as the defendant, the latter point being another hint of possible prejudice.

When the defence called Archias to the stand, the prosecution took advantage of the opportunity to cross-examine him. Archias was of Greek origin and had come to Rome in the year 102. He claimed that he had obtained his citizenship at Heraclea in 89 and that, in the same year, he had presented himself to the praetor,

Quintus Metellus. It was further admitted that he was a poet by profession, and that he had travelled extensively in pursuit of themes and patrons.

The final stroke of the prosecution came in the weighing of the testimony of the witnesses. There was no documentary evidence to show that Archias had been admitted to citizenship. What was offered instead was the memory and testimony of men, admittedly on terms of intimate friendship with the defendant, to an act of twenty-seven years before. The defendant's name never appeared in the census of those who claimed citizenship. His profession, moreover, established him as a roamer not likely to have a fixed abode. While at Rome, he was the guest of the Luculli, and there was no evidence to show that he had ever had a home of his own. In fine, he was a false pretender to the rights of Roman citizenship under the terms of the *Lex Papiria* and should, therefore, be deprived of those rights.

There is scarcely any need of going into an account of the defence. The arguments of Cicero were closely adhered to, and the case of the prosecution was met, point by point, from the evidence arranged by the Orator. Even though practically all the evidence obtainable was to be found in Cicero's presentation,—a great advantage for the defending attorneys—nevertheless they were hard put to it at times to remove the damaging impressions made by the prosecution on the minds of the jury. It was a debate from beginning to end.

And what did this experiment show? I have come to the conclusion that a class might read the *Pro Archia* four or five times with much less understanding of the legal aspect of the speech than it might acquire in a three-hour treatment as just described. I think there is no doubt about the interest created by the debating method. You have six or more principals, intensely engaged in a study of the speech, urged on by competitive motives. The competitive feature will, also, rouse interest in the jury and most of the non-participants. The class will talk about the proceedings with the result of heightened interest.

What has here been done with the *Pro Archia* may well be done with the *Bellum Catilinae*. A trial of the conspirators could be made the issue. The speeches of Caesar and Cato, together with the history of the conspiracy, would afford ample material for a lively debate, after the essay had been read in class.

In this way Latin is taken out of the realm of drudgery. It is no longer just a job of translating a number of lines and parsing a heap of nouns and verbs. Let the student see more in his Latin than the sheer labor that must go into it, grant him a view of the latent interest stored up in Latin literature, allow him to apply the standards of the life he is reading about to the life he is actually living, and measure them against each other—and Latin takes its rightful place not only as the developer of youth, but also as his delight. Make every student a crusader for Latin, because he knows that his toil, however hard, is returning him a hundred-fold.

Cleveland, Ohio.

E. C. HORNE, S. J.

Reading in the Original

ὦ διοσ αἰθήρ καὶ ταχύπτεροι πνοαί,
 ποταμῶν τε πηγαί, ποντίων τε κυμάτων
 ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα, παμμήτορ τε γῆ,
 καὶ τὸν πανόπτην κύκλον ἡλίου καλῶ·
 ἴδεσθὲ μ' οἶα πρὸς θεῶν πάσχω θεός.
 δέρχθηθ' οἷσις αἰκείαισιν
 διακναόμενος τὸν μυριετῇ
 χρόνον ἀθλεύσω.
 τοιόνδ' ὁ νέος ταγὸς μακάρων
 ἐξηῦρ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ δεσμὸν αἰκίῃ.
 φεῦ φεῦ, τὸ παρὸν τό τ' ἐπερχόμενον
 πῆμα στενάχω, πῇ ποτε μόχθων
 χρεὶ τέρματα τῶνδ' ἐπιτεῖλαι.
 καίτοι τί φημι; πάντα προὔξειπισταμαι
 σκεθρῶς τὰ μέλλοντ', οὐδὲ μοι ποταίνιον
 πῆμ' οὐδὲν ἔξει. τὴν πεπωμένην δὲ χρεὶ
 αἶσαν φέρειν ὡς ῥᾶστα, γινώσκονθ' ὅτι
 τὸ τῆς ἀνάγκης ἔστ' ἀδήριτον σθένος.

"Thou firmament of God, and swift-winged winds,
 Ye springs of rivers, and of ocean waves
 Thou smile innumerable! Mother of us all,
 O Earth, and Sun's all-seeing eye, behold,
 I pray, what I a God from Gods endure.

Behold in what foul case

I for ten thousand years

Shall struggle in my woe,

In these unseemly chains.

Such doom the new-made Monarch of the Blest
 Hath now devised for me.

Woe, woe! The present and th' oncoming pang

I wail, as I seek out

The place and hour when end of all these ills

Shall dawn on me at last.

What say I? All too clearly I foresee

The things that come, and naught of pain shall be

By me unlooked for; but I needs must bear

My destiny as best I may, knowing well

The might resistless of Necessity."

Aeschylus, *Prometheus*, 88-105; transl. by Plumptre.

When Copleston, commenting upon the opening lines of Prometheus's appeal, says that "no translation can do justice to the majestic lines in which his appeal is expressed," he is but applying to this magnificent passage a familiar canon accepted by all literary critics and applicable to all great literature. But accepted as this canon is, its truth does not come home to the student of Greek until a practical application of it to a concrete example, a sort of *demonstratio ad oculos*, enables him to balance word against word and tone against tone.

Fundamental in the structural beauty of Greek tragedy is the iambic trimeter which permits a perfect harmony of sound and sense and an adjustment of the right word to the qualities of tone and stress and length—the imitation of which is the despair of the translator. We cannot here discuss the corresponding elements in English verse, nor is the Greek element of "tone" (τόνος) always obvious enough to enable us to appreciate its beauty. We can, however, account for much of the

superiority of the original over the translation, by keeping in mind the fact that in Greek verse the *long but unstressed* syllable plays a very important part: though unstressed, it yet retains *its full length* and thereby materially contributes to the "weight" of a verse. On the other hand, the short syllable, whether stressed or unstressed, produces a corresponding lightness. As an example, take the first line of the passage quoted. In the first three feet, the long syllable predominates; this gives the proper weight to that impressive address: ὦ διοσ αἰθήρ, while the second half of the line is lightened and quickened by shorts that suit its meaning. This feature of the Greek is almost reversed in Plumptre's rendering, excellent as it is on other grounds. For while the Greek ταχύπτεροι πνοαί is like a light-winged breath, the corresponding "swift-winged winds" is *not* light and swift in its sound, but owing to the words themselves slow and heavy.

Remembering that the speaker is a god defying a god, and that the root meaning of διοσ is "bright," we are made to feel the brightness of the scene in ὦ διοσ αἰθήρ, but the rendering "firmament of God," with its connotations of firmness, stability, and reverential awe, destroys that effect.

Next, the swift, smooth compound ταχύπτεροι joined to πνοαί, with a prevalence of mutes that are carried over into the alliteration of the next line, bear along the speaker's emotion at a speed which is assisted by the tiny connectives τε — τε. The presence of long vowels gives the sound of ocean waves, and the superb figure ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα is accurately connected with κυμάτων with which it properly belongs. This figure has great beauty. Aside from its musical superiority, there is something in it that renders it more powerful than the English "smile innumerable." In English, where the hypallage is less natural, the clarity and force with which the picture is flashed forth are lessened, while the less familiar "innumerable" draws attention to itself. The effect of the Greek is further helped by the ready change from nominative to accusative or vocative, in harmony with the intensity of feeling. The sun is πανόπτην, hence κύκλον does not repeat the idea, but contributes the notion of roundness to the picture.

In the following strongly spondaic line, the insertion of μ' focuses the attention upon the *person* of the sufferer before the nature of the suffering is touched upon in the relative clause: this is due to the construction called "Prolepsis of the Subject." The important μ' is re-inforced by the ringing θεός at the end, a word which is a cry in itself, as compared with the weaker "I pray."

In the lament proper, the notion of ἴδεσθαι is resumed and strengthened by a new word, δέρχθηθ', while the English rendering repeats "behold." The vivid διακναόμενος, meaning "scraped" or "lacerated," is closely linked with αἰκείαισιν — a rugged bit of realism which is but vaguely hinted at by the English "foul case." The group τὸν μυριετῇ χρόνον suggests the mournful monotony of the eternal struggle in the perfect fitting of words to metre, assisted by the quantities

of ἀλλεύσω. The Greek arrangement gives due emphasis to the important words τοῖνδ' — ἐμοὶ — δεικῇ. The force of δεικῇ is but weakly conveyed by "unseemly."

Prometheus is bewailing his present woes, and those to come, but the poignancy of the latter is, in the Greek, greatly enhanced by the mysterious πῇ ποτε; for while the Greek removes the end of the struggle from the sufferer's sight, the English "as I search out the place and hour" removes the suggestion of endlessness. On the other hand, the inevitableness of the end is not on that account left unstressed, for there is γοή at the beginning of a line and ἐπιτεῖλαι at its end, a word used, by the way, for the fixed rising and setting of the stars.

A change in the speaker's mood is heralded in καίτοι and in the return to the trimeter. The god now foresees clearly and tells us so. And when Aeschylus makes the deity, whose very name means "foresight," speak of his ability to foresee, he uses a proportionately impressive word, προὔξισταιμαι, a verb compounded with several prepositions accurately joined to express the extent and subtlety of the god's foreknowledge. The enclosing words πάντα and σχεθρῶς express the vastness and minuteness of that perception respectively. Note also how the double negative emphasizes ποταίνιον. The αἶσαν is not only a destiny, but a destiny προωμένην. The gnomic sentiment in the last line aptly unites with sonorous majesty the three words that sum up the theme.

Throughout, the Greek words are concrete and vivid. The English rendering is less striking. It is significant that, though the translation lessens each line by a foot, there are more words to a line in the English than in the Greek. Our English versions of the classics, many of which are excellent, have their value, but Greek literature in its wealth of matter and form, in its richness of meaning and mode, is best studied in the original *Grammata*. A comparison, though by no means exhaustive, of the opening lines in the fire-god's speech with the translation by Plumptre shows that the original has a nicety of meaning and delicacy of expression which are traceable to the simplicity, force and concreteness of the Greek, to the facility with which Greek inflection makes the diction clear and musical, to the unit-force of its compounds, and to the unobtrusiveness of its particles.

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EDWARD G. CALLAHAN, S. J.

Hints for the Class-Room

Correcting Latin Exercises

Every teacher of Latin knows that the correction of Latin exercises is a troublesome task; but some teachers, no doubt, cause themselves needless trouble by failing to insist that their pupils comply with a certain correct technique in the writing of these exercises. They are surely making a mistake if they allow their pupils to use any kind or size of paper in their written assignments, to use either pencil or pen, and to arrange the

matter of the assignment on the sheet in any manner that fancy (or, shall I say, slovenliness?) dictates. The result is that they need about three times as much time for correcting an assignment as they would if they were to demand compliance with some definite method in the presentation of the Latin exercise or task.

I would make the following suggestions. Have all the pupils use paper of a uniform size and write with pen and ink. Insist that the matter of the exercise be arranged on the paper in a very definite way. Thus, for example, when assigning a lesson that calls for the declension of, say, four nouns, the inflection of the present and imperfect indicative active of *amo* and *monéo*, the translation of a dozen isolated Latin phrases into English, and the turning into Latin of four English sentences, insist on something like the following arrangement, after illustrating it on the blackboard and explaining it to the pupils somewhat as follows:

Put your name in the upper right hand corner of each page.

Beginning on the first line, write the declension of the four nouns in four parallel columns with spaces between them.

Leave the next line blank and in four more parallel columns write the required forms of *amo* and then of *monéo*.

After another blank line arrange the translation of the Latin phrases in three columns.

Again leave the following line blank and write your version of the four English sentences, seeing to it that each sentence begins a new line and is followed by a blank line.

In correcting an exercise gotten up in this fashion, the teacher will find that, after he has read a few papers, he has a mental picture of what a perfect paper should be like, and that the remainder of the papers can be corrected very rapidly. A glance down the various columns, a rapid reading of the sentences, and the paper is practically corrected. Moreover, the vacant spaces on the paper not only afford relief to the tired eye, but also provide abundant room for any marks or notes the teacher may wish to make, or for corrections the pupil may have to make later.

The Loyola Vocabularies

Do you not find it interesting and profitable to read with your class a passage from a Greek or Latin author, when the pupils are familiar with the words and constructions they encounter? On the other hand, do you know of any more trying task in the classroom than that of forging ahead through a passage with pupils that stumble at every word and have to be constantly thumbing their grammar or dictionary? There is one good remedy for this needless drudgery: make a practice of acquainting your pupils with new words, idioms, and constructions several days before they meet them in the passage you wish to read. A teacher that has once given this practice a serious trial will never abandon it; for it,

more than anything else I can think of, makes the tackling of new matter a delightful rather than a painful process. The reason is evident: with the knowledge of the meaning of new words and constructions ready to hand, all the pupil has to attend to in reading a passage is the extracting of meaning out of the *word-groups*, rather than the individual words—a truly intellectual exercise.

In following this method, the teacher will find invaluable help in the *Loyola Vocabularies*, published by the Loyola Press; for they contain the necessary words arranged, not alphabetically, but in the order of their occurrence in the text. As for bits of new syntax occurring in the passage to be read, they should be taken care of by the Prelection.

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WILLIAM R. O'DONNELL, S. J.

Presentation of Classical Composition (II)

The personally-chosen and adapted material for classical composition, to be set on the basis of the personally-chosen and well-prepared text or episode of classical Latin or Greek previously taught and assimilated, as already described, will take six weeks or even two months to complete. It must not be a heap of disparate snippets. It must be a well-framed organic unit, with a large number of ordered sections. Each section, the task of one day's composition teaching and writing, should never exceed the range of 40 to 50 words. The long single exercise is of no educative value in this field.

The preparation of such a composition should be subject to the rule that the same class period should never be burdened with *both* the correction of a preceding section of the work, and the presentation of a following one for individual writing out of class. Give a day to preparation, and another day to revision. The two could be done on one day, when three hours a day were given to Latin. It cannot effectively be done now.

Preparation is essentially a collective process. The classical text, the English material, the student's notebook for phrases, the student's jotter or note of immediate materials, should all be open. The function of the teacher is to lead in the coöperative work of complete preparation. It is essential to secure coöperation on the part of all—teacher included—for the service, use, and benefit of each student in the unit educative group, composed of class and teacher. Individual work in the composition process has its ample place, but it should be kept to that place. The conditions of modern competitive tests and examinations have been allowed to invade the classroom, to the great detriment of collective action, always of great educative service, even in the course of individual advancement.

The collective preparation is essentially an amassing of idiomatic phrases, drawn from note-books and from the maturely-prepared text. These phrases should be listed for the use of all, and they should come from the class itself as much as possible. As few as may well be should be given by the teacher. His task is to direct the

choice of areas of search, to suggest the conversion of phrases to new uses. This can be done by alteration of nouns, of adverbs, of adjectives: the pith of the phrase, (that is, its verb and case, or its verb and preposition and case) should be freely transferred to new services, remaining itself always intact. The grammatical connections to be made between these phrases as adapted for the task in hand, should be discussed by the class, and decided on, with references to grammar rules as studied by the class. The memorized clauses of the classical text, which should serve as structural forms for word order, rhythm, style, should be selected in detail and determined on by the class and the teacher.

It is evident that in this preparation process the main burden should be borne by the abler members of the class. But every occasion of calling in the services of the weaker students should be sought. For them particularly, the collective process is essential. It places the total efforts of all at their service. They see the process of composition in being, a valuable educative asset in itself. Their raw material of phrase, idiom, grammar, stylistic forms, to be used by each and all, is identical for all. Its quality is guaranteed, since it derives before their own eyes from the true source of all sound Latinity, the text. Dictionaries or vocabularies have no place in this process of preparation for classical composition. Keep to the living, vital basis of the text, for phrase usage, idiom, style, and all else. Allow no use of miscellaneous materials.

The vocabulary and structure of the resultant composition exercise, done individually by each student, will thus be of sure quality, even if the workmanship exhibited in finishing the job is not always perfect. Yet there are useful variants possible on this unified basis of action. These will provide both for the energies of the abler student, and for the special drawbacks of the weaker.

In the case of the weaker, a good and very flexible plan is to debar the writing of the whole section, under specific rules. Thus the least efficient could be told to select, and to do *well*, any one consecutive part of the section, a quarter of the whole. The choice of that quarter-section should be their own. Another group could similarly be directed to present one-half of the text, any consecutive passage of it, about that length, being open to them to choose. The aim should be to secure *good* work even from them. Abler students, on the other hand, might be directed to use freely phrases not on the standard class list for the day, under conditions. These personally-chosen phrases should be derived exclusively from the same writer that composed the basic text. For every phrase so brought into use, its *full* context and *exact* reference should be required as a note to the written exercise. This is a valuable discipline in itself, and it is of very definite service to the teacher, engaged in correction of numerous exercises. The whole process, it will be observed, tends to lighten that essential duty, correction of exercises.

Dublin, Ireland.

T. CORCORAN, S. J.

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